



AMENDMENT IN THE CLAIMS

RECEIVED

DEC 13 2003

TECH CENTER 1600/2900

1-5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) A method of initiating immune responses specific for transactivating protein or reverse transcriptase of human immunodeficiency virus type 1 (HIV-1) antigens in an animal, said method comprises ~~comprising~~ the step of:

administering said animal with an attenuated bacterial host comprising a recombinant plasmid that carries a fusion protein construct comprising a gene required for surface exposure and a gene encoding said transactivating protein or reverse transcriptase of HIV-1 antigen, wherein said bacterial host can induce both cellular and humoral anti-HIV-1 immune responses in said animal.

7. (canceled)

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 6, wherein said attenuated bacterial host is administered orally.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 6, wherein said attenuated bacterial host is administered in an oral dose of from about  $10^{12}$  to about  $10^{14}$  CFU (colony forming unit).

11. (canceled)

12. (new) The method of claim 6, wherein said gene required for surface exposure encodes *E. coli* lipoprotein signal sequence linked to a portion of the *E. coli* outer membrane protein ompA.

13. (new) The method of claim 6, wherein said attenuated bacterial host is a strain of *Salmonella typhimurium*, SL3261.